



CITY OF NORTH OAKS

**Regular Natural Resources Commission Meeting
Thursday, February 18, 2021
7 PM, Via Teleconference or Other Electronic Means Only
MEETING AGENDA**

Remote Access - *Natural Resource Commission members will participate by telephone or other electronic means pursuant to Minn. Stat. §13D.021. Any person wishing to monitor the meeting electronically from a remote location may do so by calling the following Zoom meeting videoconference number: 1-312-626-6799, Webinar ID: 848 2761 5040 or by joining the meeting via the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84827615040>. Due to the existing COVID-19 Health Pandemic, no more than five (5) members of the public may be in Council Chambers (Community Room, 100 Village Center Drive, MN) during the meeting. Once room capacity is met, anyone wishing to attend the meeting above the five (5) members of the public who may be present in the room during the meeting will be required to monitor the meeting remotely.*

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Agenda

4. Citizen Comments - *Members of the public are invited to make comments to the Commission during the public comments section. Up to four minutes shall be allowed for each speaker. No action will be taken by the Commission on items raised during the public comment period unless the item appears as an agenda item for action.*

5. Approval of Previous Month's Minutes

5a. Minutes of January 21, 2021 Natural Resource Commission for Approval
[1.21.21 NRC Meeting Minutes - Draft.docx](#)

6. Business Action Items

6a. introductions - Dr. Brooke Moore & NRC: TTF goals for 2021

6b. Discussion and Possible recommendation on water quality, state of the waters review of MCEA and Wild Rice
[Star Tribune Article river water drinkability.pdf](#)

6c. Discussion: Deer Management Goals 2021 & Administration

7. Commissioner / Staff Reports -

- *Tick Task Force Report*
- *Community Outreach: Winsor Report*
- *NOHOA/ NEST Report*
- *City Forester Report*
- *VLAWMO Tech Report*
- *City Report: NRC Emails / laptops check in*

8. Next Meeting: Thursday, March 18, 2021 7:00 p.m.

9. Adjourn

**North Oaks Natural Resources Commission
NRC Meeting Minutes
Virtual Meeting via Teleconference or Electronic Means Only
January 21, 2020 at 7 p.m.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hawkins called the meeting of January 21, 2020, to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

NRC members participated **by telephone or other electronic means** pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13D.021.

Present: Chair Andrew Hawkins, Vice Chair Kate Winsor, Commissioners Bob Larson, Shannon Dunn, David White, Penny Kianian, City Council liaison Tom Watson, Jim Hara and NOHOA liaison Patricia Orud.

Absent: Commissioner Lepoutre

Staff Present: City Administrator Kevin Kress, City Forester Mark Rehder, Recording secretary Debbie Breen

Guests: VWLAMO – Nick Voss, Education and Outreach coordinator, Sierra Weirens Volunteer at VWLAMO

A quorum was declared present.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Kianian, seconded by Winsor, to approve the agenda as submitted.

MOTION carried unanimously by roll call vote.

4. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

5. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES

MOTION by Winsor, seconded by White, to approve the November 19, 2020 minutes as submitted.

MOTION carried unanimously by roll call vote.

6. BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS

a. Introduction of New VLAWMO volunteers

- Nick Voss from VLWAMO started in 2018 hosting the Minnesota Water stewards program which is a training program for volunteers. There are 3 current MN water stewards. Added 2 more this year, including Sierra Weirens a North Oaks Resident. They are in attendance to present ideas for a Capstone water project to share with the group.
- Sierra Weirens introduced herself as a current sophomore at Smith college in Chemistry and Biology. Excited to work on these Capstone project ideas. Packet materials will be forwarded from VLAWMO to Commission, and she noted this is a great time to get started with this program.

- Typically grant funding depending on who has interest. Looking to see what interest there is in the various programs. Would look into getting grant funding depending on scope. Potential North Oaks projects include:
 - Charley Lake Development Stormwater infiltration / filtration
 - Peace United Methodist infiltration
 - Chippewa Middle School Rain Garden Maintenance
 - North Oaks Ballfields Bioswale / restoration
 - The stables Rec. center parking lot infiltration / rain garden
 - North Oaks Gold Course parking lot bioswale or infiltration ** This is the most preferred because of the hard surface and best impact.
 - Waverly Gardens BMP maintenance
- Focus on things that make the most impact. State looks for stewards to go out into their own communities and make impact.
- Commissioner Dunn asked where the current parking lot water goes in North Oaks golf club.
- Patricia Orud indicated that several of these potential projects are within the NOHOA areas. NOHOA is looking at the ball field on a potential project. She referred VLAWMO to work with their NOHOA engineer if they end of going towards any of those projects. The Golf club also has a septic project going on this summer to be aware of.
- Mr. Voss thanked Ms. Orud for the information and indicated that it may be good to meet with them regarding upcoming projects.
- Tom Watson introduced himself and mentioned that he's been involved in council in various capacities since 1991 and is aware of many projects. The ballfields used to flood frequently with many geese. In the lower northeast corner of the ballfield, the City worked with North Oaks company to install a French drain that leads through a filter and gravity down to Pleasant Lake. Recommended that we might look to see if that is working. He feels it is unlikely that the Golf course is draining into pleasant lake due to the numerous ponds on the course.
- Mr. Voss indicated that a meeting with NOHOA engineer, Golf Club, VLAWMO and City representative would be a good next step. He asked for confirmation if the NOHOA restoration project at the ballfields is in preliminary discussions. He shared a map of the possible 2021 projects, with the Legend reflecting the type of projects.
- Commissioner Dunn recommended that we look at Wilkinson project since it is in direct proximity to Wilkinson Lake.
- Voss asked about a possible partnership with either NOHOA, City, etc. in terms of individuals or organizations.
- Chair Hawkins mentioned that NRC could be leveraged to help including Grant writing, however the NRC budget is fairly small. NOHOA Orud mentioned that they do have a budget for Natural resources, would just need to decide where it is allocated.
- Chair Hawkins asked Ms. Wierens what the timeline for the project is, with winter conditions and implementation timing. She stated planning would be during the Spring while she is on campus, with a late May implementation. Depending on the project, the needs could involve manual work, or bringing in machinery. He also indicated that the NRC may be forming a water quality subcommittee which this may flow into.
- Patricia volunteered to be a NOHOA point of contact, along with Hawkins and Kress as point persons for Ms. Wierens.

- Liaison Watson indicated that the Presbyterians homes or North Oaks Company might be interested in sharing in some costs of projects. Pastor Dr. Linn, the head of Presbyterian Homes, would be a good contact.
- Commissioner Dunn would rank the Charley Lake option as lower, because long term maintenance costs are a consideration.

b. Discussion and possible recommendation on Pesticide Education Plan

- Winsor indicated that pesticide education plan Phase 1 is in the packet. The initial focus would be on mosquito and tick control. An article has been submitted to the North Oaks news about the low effects of using mosquito control in yards.

MOTION by Commissioner Dunn, seconded by Winsor, to approve the pesticide education plan and forward to City Council for consideration.

- Commissioner Kianan inquired how the survey would be distributed.
- Commissioner Hawkins referenced the tick task force survey. Originally survey monkey was used for the Tick task force. The survey poll done in the Spring by tick task force used Polco survey tool. The survey would be an augment to the tasks, with the survey as a bonus. The success of plan would be the completion of the Tasks and timeline.
- Commissioner Kianan mentioned that it would be great to also get out the information at community events. In past years, we would have booths for both NRC and Tick Task force. We will use those means as possible under these pandemic circumstances.

MOTION passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Administrator Kress to put it on the Agenda for City Council under New Business at the February meeting.

c. Discussion and possible recommend on Insect awareness, and Ticks in North Oaks

- Chair Hawkins mentioned at the last meeting, that the Tick Force minutes indicated that Tick Task force Chair Brooke Moore would need to be turned over due her work commitments. He spoke to Dr. Moore and Dr. Kingston on the tick task force over December and the holidays. They talked through how the NRC may assist. Their thoughts are that there is quite a bit of overlap between tick task force and NRC including brochures, documentation, awareness, meetings, etc. The Tick Task force has outlined the tasks that need to be done along with a normal schedule of activities and community outreach. Rick and Brooke want to be sure that these efforts continue.
- Commissioner White indicated that he feels like it is a perfect fit with the resources of the NRC members. The tick task force is a great service to the community.
- Commissioner Larson confirmed that the teamwork from NRC would be good.
- Commissioner Winsor asked what this could look like. Hawkins recommended that it could be a Subcommittee under Natural Resource committee. Brooke indicated that she would be willing to be an ongoing participant in the committee, just not the time to Chair it. Chair Hawkins stated he would be happy to chair a subcommittee. Tick task force provides an annual update to the Council.
- Winsor would be in favor of a subcommittee and inviting residents and NOHOA to join. White indicated he'd like to see tick task force in the name of Natural resource Commission. Watson suggested that they keep tick task force out of the name, and focus should be more on Natural Resource Planning Commission. He'd like to also suggest the NRC entertain the oversight of the Deer Management program. This is a

natural fit with tick task force initiatives. Would like to focus on the planning part of the Commission and take a look at the scope of the NRC and revise if need be.

- White agrees with this concept. Administrator Kress mentioned might want to include future discussion on a turkey program. Watson mentioned that we just need to get smarter about living with our natural resources and preserving valuable woodlands and nature.
- Chair Hawkins asked the newer Commissioners Dunn and Kianan if rolling in tick task force rolling made sense to them. Dunn confirmed their information communicated is great and makes sense to fold the group in. Kianan mentioned that ticks also carry other disease, and feels that continued education about what other diseases may be involved will become important over the next few years.
- Hawkins agreed that managing the natural resources while educating the public is important. Liaison Hara mentioned that 4 of his family members had Lyme disease with various symptoms. The more education that can be done along with treatment protocols is important to get out there to our residents.
- Liaison Watson mentioned soon all the under-developed lots will have buildings on them. From a structural stand point will soon have even more issues to look at. The new Council may even need to add additional subcommittee's going forward.
- Chair Hawkins mentioned the need for technology and knowledge transfer of any pertinent information from any committees and prior initiatives. May be helpful to consolidate all information and knowledge that is gained.
- Watson clarified that integrating the tick task force into NRC and folder them into a natural resource initiative only strengthens the committee. The current council is not looking to remove the tick task force.

MOTION by Hawkins, seconded by Dunn, to integrate the tick task force into a subcommittee of Natural Resource Committee. MOTION carried unanimously by roll call.

d. Discussion and Possible recommendation on water quality

- Chair Hawkins mentioned importance of a consistent message throughout the community on preserving water quality. There are numerous water items of importance: Chain of Lakes, surface water management plan, Highway 96 superfund site, water quality and water sampling, aging Septic systems, aquatic invasive species, opportunities for funding with DNR to address some of these topics. Chair proposes making water quality one of our priorities.
- Commissioner Dunn likes the idea. There is also stormwater, groundwater wells and septic. The group may need to decide where to focus efforts. Commissioner Kianan sees them falling into 2 groups – shared resources, and individual homeowner responsibilities. The homeowner's education tasks vs. Community based are considerations as to what might have biggest impact's to focus efforts.
- Liasion Orud indicated that NOHOA is in process of developing Natural resource environment plan includes water, storm, fungi, bugs and more. A foundation plan has been developed for the 5,000 + acres that they manage. They are hiring a natural environment land manager that can help take their plan and turn it into action. Shoreline efforts, drainage efforts, etc. and surface water efforts are connected into water happens below ground. NRC is the education efforts, and NOHOA is the boots on the ground initiatives.

- Commissioner White mentioned it's an excellent step forward. Anything we can do to advance together with NOHOA is great. He would like to quantify if / where there is a biggest problem.
- Winsor wanted to clarify the City responsibilities for water quality. Watson indicated that the City is involved and feels there are matters that NOHOA can't affect such as the state waters of Pleasant Lake. The DNR has done tons of research of the water bodies of North Oaks and feels the City has obligations to follow state law. He believes that the City and NOHOA should be working together jointly as they have state law to adhere. He also wants the City take an effort to make sure we are communicating. Biggest pollutant in Minnesota are mismanaged septic systems. Our new Building inspector Ohman and septic inspector Humpal will need to take a hard look at enforcement on septic systems that could risk groundwater.
- NOHOA Orud is happy to hear efforts to collaborate as there is plenty of work to go around.
- Chair Hawkins defines steps as: define area of responsibility of NOHOA and City, pare down the list to the priorities and impact. Dunn agreed that need to clarify responsibilities, then take look and see what falls under city rubric, how to break them into categories and attack short term.
- White mentioned that there will likely be others players as well such as VLAWMO, DNR, etc.
- Watson confirmed water quality is important topic throughout the state. He suggests NRC create a water quality subcommittee, with a statement for the community, a single page outline and focus to share. The NRC and NOHOA worked together on the woodland subcommittee, and they realized best to create plan and then bring it to NRC due to the different ways they manage the process. Orud and Watson will conversations on how to most effectively put the puzzle together. Watson asked for NRC to put together a statement on water quality to bring to the Council.
- Liaison Hara believes this is a long-term ongoing project list, and various items may be focus for different years. May have to tackle just a few each year on this living document.
- Watson mentioned the Comp plan has water quality section, and some of the state agencies also have information.
- Chair Hawkins will share his google drive as a repository for shared water quality information.

7. COMMISSIONER / STAFF REPORTS

7a. Tick Task Force Report: David White

- Previous tick task force minutes are included in the Agenda packet.

7b. Community Outreach: Winsor Report

- North Oaks news article featured using water wisely in yard and garden was cowritten by Winsor and VLAWMO for Nick Voss. For February issue they have submitted article regarding Adulticide. For March issue, Winsor is looking at information on reducing mosquito bites in yard.

7c. NOHOA/ NEST Report: Diane Gorder

- Pleasant Lake management plan is working with VLAWMO to determine whether it is infilling or where soggy lake bottom came from. The Barr engineering report shows that curly leaf pondweed is contributing to the soggy bottom. The bottom feeding carp also contributes. There is a plan to treat curly leaf pondweed in May. The carp were scheduled for removal, but the market was not available during Covid. They do plan to do this program in coordination with the DNR this year to reduce the tonnage of carp. Bluewater and Natural shore technology is looking at water quality and swimmers itch and investigating what they can do to reduce the initial cause. E.coli is caused by heat, decomposition of vegetation, etc. They are working with VLAWMO on prevention. Coon Rapids water authority put in grates with ½ inch openings to address zebra mussels, but it hasn't worked. It is also present there.
- Land based projects also in place to remove invasive species based on data, not just personal experience. VLAWMO is key to helping them reduce the salt on the road, etc. Pleasant Lake is being addressed at this time, but hope to scale up to other lakes as move along.
- Important task to hire natural body land Manager who could write plans, grant writing, overseeing vendors, etc. NOHOA focus on deliberate task of preserving and improving the environment.
- Liaison Hara asked since our watershed serves so many watersheds, if other communities are involved. Orud mentioned that they are working with the Regional Water authority who is the managing body on these projects and stabilizing water level. Other communities are part of VLAWMO and Regional Water authority.
- Watson stated they had approached St. Paul Regional Water authority in the past, but they haven't paid us for anything. There is new administration coming into St. Paul regional water authority so that may change. Kress mentioned that a Joint powers agreement would be needed for a joint payment venture from various communities.

7d. Woodland Subcommittee

- Lepoutre was not in attendance. No report.

7e. City Forester Report:

- Removal deadline for diseased oaks is Feb. 1st, road restrictions will be coming on soon, so in best interest to take care of them soon. 75% of them are going.
- Hazard tree update – about a dozen trees left and working with homeowners.
- Continuing work on canopy coverage, working on an article related to fun facts on North Oaks related to water and tree coverage.
- Finalized oriental bittersweet grant funding, waiting for reimbursement from department of agriculture.
- The link for work the county volunteers' oriental bittersweet sites within North Oaks. (**** PUT ON WEB???)
- Kianan asked how the diseased trees were identified. Disease tree expert has identified the problems by canvassing area, then working with resident to treatment.
- Chair Hawkins mentioned the Natural Resources webpage on the City website, and encourages any additional information to be sent to the city.

7f. VLAWMO Tech Committee Report:

- Nothing further.

7g. City Report:

- Liaison Watson welcomed Penny and Shannon to the community. He has a passion for being involved in the natural resources and taking care of the earth. Excited that the keystone pipeline was recently pulled, and hopeful that the Endridge line will be next.
- Spoke about the importance of putting back the emphasis on natural resources. Climate change must be considered when completing Environment assessment worksheet, and it is overdue. Feels important to continue work with VLAWMO, and rekindle relationships with DNR.
- Look forward to reestablishing a relationship with NOHOA that has deteriorated over the past 10 years. Look forward to revisiting, restoring some of these issues.
- Will look again at the 3 remaining Gate Hill, Island Field, and Red forest Way, and may consult with NRC on these matters.
- Centerville Road in the past have been difficult to drive. The NOC will need to figure out a water to access Island Field over old tires and wetlands.
- One of the conditions of replacement septic systems was to have a forester being onsite to mark off trees to work around. Will look to make sure proper care is taking care to preserve what is onsite as new systems go in.
- Watson inquired how many deer have been taken so far. Staff mentioned about 5 over the past several weeks. Kress will provide counts at the next meeting. Watson mentioned that in the past, once the snow fell they would track the deer, take an aerial survey, before they put any traps in ground. Around Christmas and March were the typical deer movement aerial surveys. Last aerial deer count was thought to be in 2016. In 1991, there were 1,100 deer. The desired capacity was 35 per square mile.

8. NEXT MEETING: Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 7 p.m. through Virtual Means.

ADJOURNED at 9:40 p.m.:

MOTION by White, seconded by Winsor, to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION carried unanimously by roll call.

Kevin Kress, City Administrator

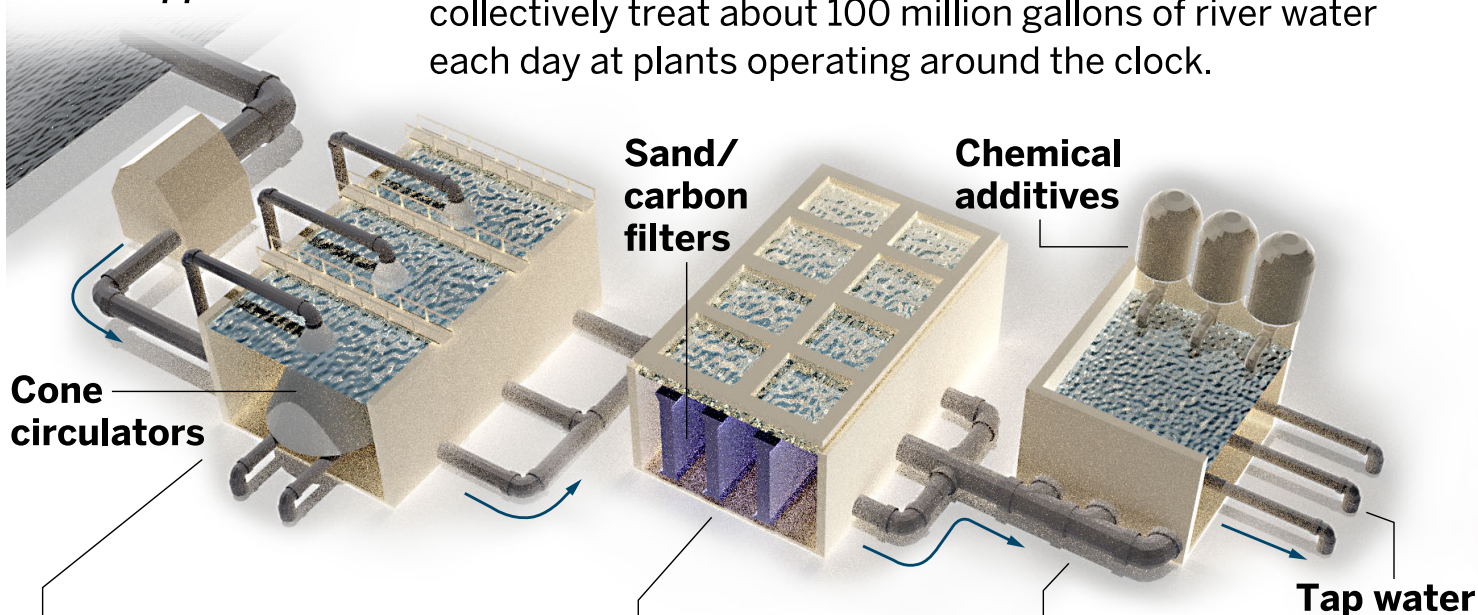
Chair, Andrew Hawkins

Date approved: _____

How river water is made safe to drink

Minneapolis and St. Paul get their water from the Mississippi River in Fridley, upstream of the central cities. The cities collectively treat about 100 million gallons of river water each day at plants operating around the clock.

Mississippi River



- 1** The plants mix lime into the water to remove minerals like magnesium and calcium – in addition to some harmful stuff – a process known as “softening.” Another chemical, Aluminum sulfate, removes the dissolved organic material that gives the water a tea-like color.
- 2** The water passes through filters comprised of sand and granular-activated carbon, which remove taste, odor and remaining small particles.
- 3** Chlorine is added to kill any remaining viruses and bacteria. The plants also add fluoride to improve dental health, and ammonia to lengthen the effects of the chlorine and remove the bleach-like odor.

Sources: City of Minneapolis and St. Paul Regional Water Services

MARK BOSWELL • Star Tribune